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Chairman: Mr. Koudelka ..... (Czech Republic)

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In the absence of Mr. Wali (Nigeria), Mr. Koudelka (Czech Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Aljuwaied** (United Arab Emirates) said that the positive results of economic development and technological progress had reached only a small part of the world's population. Hunger, poverty, chronic disease and unemployment, as well as armed conflict, terrorism and foreign occupation, continued to obstruct development. While the United Arab Emirates welcomed the positive initiatives by the developed States with regard to direct development assistance and debt cancellation for some of the poor countries, it also called for urgent implementation of all the recommendations and resolutions of international conferences and summits on development, especially the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the South Summit convened at Doha, and the Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

2. International evaluations indicated that the United Arab Emirates had achieved considerable success in all areas of development through sound use of oil revenues combined with infrastructure improvements aimed at diversifying sources of income and expanding the production base. The share of non-oil sectors in the gross domestic product (GDP) had increased from 54 per cent in 1990 to more than 67 per cent in 2004.

3. The role of the private sector in economic development had been enhanced through direct and indirect methods of stimulating investment, infrastructure improvements, and support for small businesses. Human resources had been developed by providing education, employment, and social and health care to all segments of society, including men, women, people with special needs, the handicapped and the elderly. The United Arab Emirates had advanced from 46 on the Human Development Index in 2000 to 41 in 2004. Technology was being utilized for development, especially the concept of electronic government. Care was being taken to insert an environmental dimension into national economic planning in accordance with Agenda 21 adopted by the Earth Summit.

4. The United Arab Emirates had contributed to global partnership by entering into bilateral, regional and international agreements, as well as by offering financial and in kind assistance to many developing countries and countries afflicted by conflict and natural disasters, which had amounted to approximately 4 per cent of the State's gross domestic product in 2000. The United Arab Emirates was also an important source of remittances by foreign workers to their countries of origin.

5. **Mr. Alimov** (Tajikistan) said that, while the Summit Outcome was not a reflection of the aspirations of the poor and very poor nations, it would mobilize and stimulate efforts worldwide to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Summit had once again confirmed that the approach of the Monterrey Consensus to development issues was valid. Each developing country had primary responsibility for its own development, and the Tajik Government was fully committed to solving the country's social and economic problems. Tajikistan had been one of the first countries to make an overall assessment of its needs relative to the Millennium Development Goals, forming the basis of the National Development Strategy for 2006-2015 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2006-2008. It was more vital than ever to recognize the efforts of countries which had taken measures towards achieving those Goals and succeeded in creating a favourable domestic environment, including good governance, rule of law, action against corruption and encouragement of investment. In addition, however, the international community should provide support by taking measures to overcome poverty, increase the volume and quality of development financing, create an equitable international trade system, reduce debt, remove environmental risks and solve demographic problems. Post-conflict countries like Tajikistan, engaged in peacebuilding and striving towards development, were entitled to expect appropriate international support and removal of obstacles to their integration in the world economy. The Summit had confirmed that the time had come for bold targeted steps to remove external difficulties to such integration. In Tajikistan, a landlocked country, those difficulties concerned access to investments, markets and modern technology, closed borders and barriers to free movement of goods, services, capital and labour.

6. Tajikistan hoped therefore that the international community would note and support the decisions of the Almaty Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and was in favour of a high-level dialogue on international migration and development at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. Official development assistance (ODA) should increase in volume and quality, become more stable and predictable and reflect the priorities of recipient countries, and United Nations agencies should make greater use of national project execution. He welcomed the trend towards innovative financing for development, and looked forward to effective implementation of relevant initiatives and pilot projects proposed by a number of States, including Tajikistan.

7. His Government supported international efforts to reduce the costs of migrant remittances and to enhance their stimulating effect on development, above all in the poorest countries. It also welcomed the Summit decisions favouring universal multilateral trade and genuine free trade. Speedy conclusion of the Doha Round was desirable, and he hoped the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong would promote that goal. Regional cooperation was important for development, and Tajikistan supported more active and stronger regional cooperation in Central Asia, inter alia through the Organization of Central Asian Cooperation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Economic Community. Among the sustainable development goals affirmed by the Summit, Tajikistan considered effective and sound water use to be a priority. In Tajikistan, special attention was being given to the problem of providing drinking water for all. Landmark action at the international level included the International Year of Freshwater in 2003 and the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" initiated on 22 March 2005, both on the initiative of Tajikistan. Over recent years an international water agenda had been agreed, aimed at stable management of water resources. The success of the Decade was dependent on collaborative effort, and his Government counted on the active participation of all countries, as well as of the organizations in the United Nations system.

8. **Mr. Ileka** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that, thanks to a crisis recovery programme supported by the international community, his country was recovering from the destruction caused by two armed conflicts. The Government's Economic Programme covered economic and social measures, institutional reforms, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the national emergency capacity-building programme. Its political component covered respect for rights and freedoms, democracy and good governance (including preparation of elections to install democracy and give the country legitimate and credible institutions), and post-conflict measures including in particular demobilization, disarmament, reintegration and resettlement (DDRR).

9. The PRSP was currently in its final phase, intended to enable the country to benefit fully from the cancellation of its external debt. However, it needed to be supported by a microcredit system focused on rural and agricultural development.

10. The scale of the infrastructure destruction and the degree of economic and social deterioration meant that reconstruction was an immense task, but progress could be seen, for example, in the improved rate of economic growth. However, that growth was fragile, because it came from peripheral sectors of the economy rather than from the basic sectors with high growth and job-creation potential such as agriculture or mining.

11. On the social front, the preceding ten years of crisis and conflict had caused the collapse of the transportation system and the insecurity in certain provinces had shattered the social framework. Destruction, abandonment of education and health systems, dispersal of families, break-up of traditional solidarity networks and psychological trauma had had a devastating effect on social and human capital. As a consequence, quality of education had declined and the Government was going to have great difficulty achieving the second of the Millennium Development Goals: "Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling".

12. According to figures from United Nations agencies, 75 per cent of the population lived on less than one dollar a day. Hunger was widespread, affecting 16 million people. There were more than 3 million people living with HIV/AIDS, the acceleration of the epidemic being due to major population displacements, the collapse of the health system, the presence of troops from countries particularly affected, and sexual violence. Other diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid or cholera were also rife. Life expectancy was only 45 years; infant mortality was

around 128 per thousand births, while maternal mortality was among the highest in the world, at 1,289 per 100,000 births. In its efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and to make a success of its post-conflict programme, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was confronted with major obstacles arising out of the uniqueness and complexity of its situation. The World Bank and UNDP estimated the probability that a post-conflict programme would fail at 50 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively, in cases where the reason for the conflict had to do with natural resources. That was indeed the case in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some of whose neighbours to the East did not hesitate to plunder its natural resources and other forms of wealth.

13. However, since its economically strategic geographical location, and its natural resources naturally conferred on the Democratic Republic of the Congo the role of prime mover of subregional and regional development, sustainable development in that country would undoubtedly bring major and lasting advantages for its neighbours as well, far outweighing the illicit short-term gains of smuggling and of pillage perpetrated in the form of State terrorism. For that reason, the Democratic Republic of the Congo renewed its call to the international community to maintain strong support for the process that had emerged from the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The commitments made in Dar es Salaam, which were fully in accord with the Millennium Development Goals, had to be fully implemented through systematic mobilization of the resources necessary for the immense task of reconstruction, in order to create the basis for sustained subregional cooperation.

14. The numerous meetings held on development had created an awareness of the flagrant and scandalous disparity between rich and poor countries, and of the poverty and misery afflicting 80 per cent of the countries of the world, 50 per cent of them being in Africa. Today, more than 80 per cent of African States were highly indebted poor countries.

15. According to statistics of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, Africa would not achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 with a rate of growth lower than 7 per cent. That figure had to be seen against the 4.6 per cent achieved in 2004, the highest in the past 10 years, and against the 5 per cent anticipated in the near future, unless special measures were taken, in particular the provision of financing for a major leap forward for Africa.

16. **Ms. Gunasekera** (Sri Lanka) noted that Sri Lanka had pledged to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The Government's vision of development accorded high priority to education and health. Although it already had a very satisfactory 92 per cent literacy rate for both women and men, Sri Lanka had introduced comprehensive reforms in the education sector, including a tripling of its budget, to keep pace with a rapidly changing and globalized world. Consequently, it had already achieved the Goal for primary education, with a net enrolment of 98.3 per cent. In the area of gender equality and the empowerment of woman, the high female literacy rates in Sri Lanka had resulted in comparatively high rates of employment of females at executive levels and high standards of maternal and childcare. The infant mortality rate was only 17 per 1,000 live births, and Sri Lanka had achieved the Goal for maternal mortality rates also.

17. However, poverty remained a major challenge. The Government had implemented pro-poor policies and was taking further steps through the adoption of economic and social programmes in cooperation with bilateral and multilateral development partners. Debt relief had the potential to substantially increase investment in sectors that were crucial for achieving development goals. At least a quarter of the world's population lived in lower middle income countries. Excessive debt burdens continued to be a great hindrance to the growth potential of many such countries, especially in the light of escalating oil prices and declining commodity prices. It had been estimated that every percentage point increase in debt service in low-income countries reduced public investment by about 0.2 per cent. Therefore, cancellation of half the debt of low-income countries would translate into a 0.5 per cent increase in annual growth and fiscal space for increased public and private investment.

18. The economy of Sri Lanka relied on the export of agricultural commodities and low-end manufacturing such as textiles and apparel. Consequently, it was facing difficulty as a result of the expiration of the Multifibre Arrangement. Many developing countries had taken steps to open their economies with a view to expanding exports, with the idea that increased trade, rather than aid, would engender economic

development. However, significant trade barriers still existed in various forms. The process of globalization had not created a level playing field or generated the expected trickle-down benefits for improving the standards of living of all people, and its benefits had not been evenly spread between developed and developing countries. Sri Lanka therefore called on the developed countries to ensure that the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong and the whole Doha Round lived up to expectations.

19. The international community needed to recognize the nexus between international migration and development, and the challenges and opportunities that migration presented to both sending and receiving countries. The high-level dialogue to be held in 2006 would provide an opportunity to examine the issue further.

20. Recalling the unprecedented disaster of the tsunami of December 2004, she said that the response of friendly governments, the United Nations, other international organizations and civil society had created new confidence in the power of peoples, working in unison across the globe, to act in the best interests of humankind for a new and better world. Sri Lanka's economy was projected to grow by as much as 5.5 per cent in the current year as roads and hotels damaged by the tsunami were rebuilt and the fisheries and tourism industries began to recover.

21. The experience of the tsunami, and the occurrence of other recent disasters, had made Sri Lanka even more concerned about the need to develop effective disaster management. Initiatives for setting up global early warning systems should receive priority and international effort should be directed towards supporting national efforts to build and strengthen national and regional capacity. The United Nations could play a useful role in compiling best practices in that area.

22. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic) noted that the above-average gains made in the past two years by the developing world were threatened by economic disruptions. Economic imbalances in particular made it impossible for less developed and poor countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The difficulties in negotiations over the Outcome at the High-level Plenary Meeting, particularly over trade and official development assistance, gave cause for doubt about the strength of commitment to a free and fair trade system that shared its benefits between developed and developing countries. Obstacles should not be placed in the path of the Organization's universality for political reasons. The developed countries should meet the target percentages for official development assistance instead of using them as a means of applying political pressure.

23. While the Syrian Arab Republic welcomed the Group of Eight's decision to cancel the debts of the poorest countries, it felt that the debts of all the less developed countries should be cancelled and that the debts of the middle-income countries should be substantially reduced. It also welcomed the priority given to development in Africa and the innovative ideas for financing important projects there. It called for greater efforts to create favourable conditions for countries with special needs, and in particular for an international mechanism to mitigate the effects of natural disasters.

24. International efforts to achieve the Development Goals needed to take into account the technology gap between developing and developed nations. The Syrian Arab Republic stressed the importance of making use of the ideas contained in the reports issued prior to the High-level Plenary Meeting, and of maximizing benefit from the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. In the area of the environment, mobilization of resources, technology transfer and capacity-building were required to strengthen the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and other environmental agreements, and additional resources should be provided to the Global Environment Facility.

25. The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirmed its position that the use of unilateral coercive economic measures was a violation of the principles of the United Nations, international law, the multilateral trading system, and the World Trade Organization. It constituted a dangerous obstacle to economic and social development in the developing countries.

26. His Government had been one of the first to submit a report on the Millennium Development Goals, and had recently issued a second. It had made great efforts to incorporate the Millennium Development Goals into its national economic plan, which stressed sustainable development through increased local investment, structural changes with value added,

enhancement of sectoral linkages, competitive markets, and intensive investment in human capital capacity development, and administrative organization.

27. The Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, Palestinian lands, and the Lebanese Shaba farmlands continued to form an obstacle to sustainable development in the region. The Millennium Development Goals would never be completely achieved as long as a blind eye was turned towards the Israeli occupation that violated the human rights of the region's people, including the right to life and the right to development.

28. **Ms. Soto** (Costa Rica) pointed out that there were only ten years left in which to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It was clear that the Goals would remain no more than a declaration of good intentions unless there was strong support and commitment from the international community. Such support had to go beyond merely meeting the targets for official development assistance (ODA), to include access to markets, institutional reforms and good governance at all levels. Since many developing countries' principal source of earning was and would remain trade, an increase in ODA on its own, unaccompanied by greater access to markets for the products of the developing countries or elimination of trade-distorting subsidies, would create an even greater dependence on external assistance in those countries receiving such aid, and greater poverty and inequality in the countries not receiving it.

29. Development was broader and more ambitious than the Millennium Development Goals. Sustainable development essentially went beyond the fight against poverty: it was the opportunity to share in the general well-being, the full enjoyment of human, political, social and environmental rights and ultimately the freedom of people to choose the type of life that they wished to live. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals would be the first steps along the road towards that level of human development, and it must not be forgotten that countries were at different stages of development and thus had differing needs.

30. The Millennium Development Goals must be tackled comprehensively, not each in isolation. It was clear, for example, that sustainable management of natural resources was key to achieving all the Millennium Development Goals, not just those explicitly related to the environment.

31. Costa Rica was pleased that the Outcome of the 2005 Summit stated that support needed to be given to the development efforts of the middle-income developing countries, because they were home to 280 million people living on less than one dollar a day and 870 million living on less than two dollars a day. It also welcomed the reference to the need to consider debt relief or restructuring for those middle-income countries that had an unsustainable level of debt. The investments required by a developing country like Costa Rica were immense, and had to compete with other priorities in the allocation of resources in fundamental areas such as education, health and transportation. It would be counterproductive to penalize countries like Costa Rica that had made significant strides towards disarmament, respect for human rights, a fair labour system and protection of the environment, by excluding them from cooperation programmes and restricting the entry of their products to developed countries' markets. The middle-income countries needed predictable and consistent assistance if they were not to fall into distressing situations that would be more costly to cure than they would have been to prevent.

32. Costa Rica had great expectations of the outcome of the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization to be held in Hong Kong. The United Nations General Assembly had to send a clear political message that the development dimension had to be an integral part of each of the areas of the negotiations. According to the World Bank, elimination of significant obstacles to trade would enable 140 million people to emerge from extreme poverty. That would go a long way to achieving the first of the Millennium Development Goals: "Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day".

33. The Outcome of the Summit presented few new ideas or commitments to genuine common action by the international community. Now the challenge was to build on what existed without backing down on the issues already agreed at the major summits and conferences of the United Nations in the economic and social sphere. Countries must constantly bear in mind that those most affected by their actions, or inaction, were always the poorest and most vulnerable.

34. **Mr. Aliyev** (Azerbaijan) said that the Committee's role in translating into action the commitments made at the recent High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly was anything but

trivial. In promoting financing for development, the Committee should give priority to areas such as poverty eradication, macroeconomic policy, sustainable development, and operational activities for the development of countries with special needs.

35. Azerbaijan was pleased that on the whole the *World Economic and Social Survey 2005* projected economic growth and favourable prospects for development. Although it showed an economic revival in Azerbaijan's own region, specific country analyses would be of interest, for the region comprised economies in transition that were of various stages of development and performance.

36. Higher rates of economic growth could not be sustained without increased investment, especially in research and development which was crucial to boosting productivity while improving the quality of human capital and technology.

37. Unstable prices for commodities were a serious issue. Commodity exporters in developing countries should be given market access and helped to develop risk-management strategies and flexible compensatory schemes.

38. As the first country to issue a fiscal transparency report, Azerbaijan advocated transparency. However, transparent management of revenues would not solve all the problems of mineral-exporting developing countries, which also required information on best practices and recommendations for economic diversification to better meet their development challenges. While oil prices should indeed be viewed in the context of growing demand, the limited technical capacities of the developing countries — which comprised the majority of energy-exporting countries — should be taken into account.

39. The landlocked developing countries, facing multifaceted problems in their trade relations, were particularly vulnerable in terms of geography and the size of their economies. The WTO had taken a welcome approach in its consideration of "smallness".

40. His delegation also looked forward to discussions on the revitalization of the Committee's work and results.

41. **Mr. Yushkevich** (Belarus) noted that it was the task of the Second Committee to pursue the agreement reached at the recent Summit and high-level international conferences. A precondition of social and economic progress was the solution of development financing issues. Belarus supported the Qatar initiative to hold the first review conference on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha in 2007. The multilateral financial institutions should pay attention to the special needs and actual options of developing countries and transition economies, based on their selected reform and development strategies.

42. It was regrettable that the Summit Outcome did not contain wide-ranging recommendations on the development of international trade. The WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong should provide a breakthrough in the liberalization of international trade and in attitudes towards the interests of developing countries and transition economies.

43. His delegation looked forward to the high-level dialogue on international migration and development in 2006. Greater international cooperation, exchange of data, and financial and technical assistance remained essential in preventing and combating illegal migration and thus dealing with the associated worldwide issues of trans-border crime, drug trafficking, terrorism and human trafficking. The establishment of legal liability for using trafficked persons was a promising means of combating human trafficking. He proposed the creation under United Nations auspices of a worldwide partnership against slavery and human trafficking in the twenty-first century.

44. The Commission on Sustainable Development in particular ought to consider issues relating to the energy crisis. In view of the unprecedented environmental change and its consequences for development it was essential that Member States fulfil their obligations on the protection of the ozone layer, and accede to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

45. The provisions of General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system must be scrupulously respected. He also supported the conclusion of the *2005 Human Development Report* that responsibility for coordinating national strategies and priorities in the use of external aid lay mainly with the Governments of recipient countries.

46. Owing to globalization, developing countries had become more vulnerable to problems arising in the economies of developed industrial countries, which

placed an additional burden of responsibility on the latter. He drew attention to the needs of middle-income countries, in particular the transition economies, which were at times overlooked.

47. International development strategies and programmes should make more effective use of information and communication technologies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. No effort should be spared, in particular by the regional commissions and the Member States, in preparing for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis in November 2005. The regional commissions and United Nations bodies responsible for operational activities should play a more active part in reducing the gap in this area.

48. Belarus supported action against corruption and the relevant recommendations of the eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Corruption in developing and transition economy countries could be reduced through greater collaboration with the enforcement agencies of developed countries. The inadequacies of legal mechanisms in the developing and transition economy countries should not serve as an excuse to refuse legal collaboration and extradition of persons suspected of transferring criminal or improperly acquired funds. The provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption concerning the return of assets should be scrupulously observed.

49. **Mr. Chidyausiku** (Zimbabwe) said that, while the 2005 World Summit Outcome could be used to guide the Committee's work, it fell short of expectations on several fronts. The commitments made in the Millennium Declaration regarding the global partnership for development remained largely unfulfilled, with no new sources of financing for development materializing in a concrete manner. Development assistance, debt relief and foreign direct investment continued to have conditions attached to them, including "quick-win" initiatives. Such a situation impacted negatively on the ability of developing countries to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals. Progress also needed to be made on extending external debt cancellation to low- and middle-income countries.

50. While Zimbabwe welcomed the commitment to address the special needs of Africa, it was concerned by the lack of time-bound targets and practical follow-up. It was equally concerned that the Outcome did not treat HIV/AIDS as a humanitarian emergency, but merely set a goal of universal access to treatment by 2010, without indicating concrete and sequential steps for implementation. His delegation hoped that the Committee would give serious attention to the issue, which was a matter of life and death.

51. His delegation also regretted that the Outcome touched only briefly on trade issues. Yet there was an urgent need to demonstrate commitment in the run-up to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference later in the year. Developing countries needed a sense of renewed hope that relief was in sight in areas such as market access, abolition of subsidies, trade facilitation and supply-side capacity-building. Change would come about only when the provisions for special and differential treatment in existing WTO agreements were improved, in line with the 2001 Doha Declaration.

52. Landlocked developing countries faced even more daunting challenges associated with the transmission of goods over long distances and across borders. The successful conclusion of market access and trade facilitation, including special and differential treatment negotiations, was therefore an urgent issue for such countries. The international community must give priority to implementing the Almaty Programme of Action adopted in 2003.

53. His delegation was pleased that the Outcome recognized the critical role of rural and agricultural development in fighting poverty, hunger and malnutrition and strengthening the economies of developing countries. Zimbabwe had already taken measures to address extreme poverty and ensure sustained food production through its land redistribution programme. Support to the rural and agricultural sector should be unconditional and adequate political space given to national Governments, in exercising their sovereignty to deploy and distribute their natural resources according to democratic and transparent priorities in line with the provisions of Agenda 21. The use of coercive economic measures and the adoption of law and regulations with extraterritorial effect, including sanctions, to deter developing countries from exercising their sovereign right over their natural resources should never be encouraged. His delegation expected the Committee to take a firm stand on the

issue in order to send a clear message to those guilty of such practices.

54. The Committee should also give the issue of environmental sustainability the attention it deserved. Environmental protection measures, as laid down in goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, should be taken seriously. For its part, Zimbabwe had taken a number of specific measures, such as enacting the Environmental Management Act and setting up an Environmental Management Agency, which would soon become operational.

55. **Mr. Ndjonkou** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that the 2005 World Summit had put decent work and employment firmly back on the national and global development agenda. The unequivocal pledge to support fair globalization and make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all a central objective of relevant national and international policies as well as national development strategies, as part of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, was now reinforcing his organization's long history of work on poverty reduction, the mandate for which was contained in the 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia. His organization would be guided by that commitment in its support for national development strategies and would continue to promote linkages between decent work and other comprehensive national frameworks within the multilateral system, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

56. When pursuing such work at the national level, the social dimension of globalization must be taken into consideration. The world had moved from an international economy in which national economies interacted with each other in a global market to a global economy in which many of the relationships and mechanisms were themselves global in nature. In order for globalization to benefit all, the global economy must deliver decent work. In that regard, special emphasis must be placed on young people, who often worked unacceptably long hours under informal, intermittent and insecure work arrangements characterized by low productivity, meagre earnings and reduced labour protection. As an active contributor to the Youth Employment Network, ILO had a special role to play in promoting youth employment and could act as a catalyst in mobilizing support and implementing integrated policies and programmes to effectively meet the Millennium Declaration's commitment on decent and productive work for youth.

57. Turning to other commitments in the Outcome that were important components of the work of ILO, he said that the agency's mandate on gender equality — which was grounded in international labour Conventions and International Labour Conference resolutions on gender — was to promote equality between women and men in the world of work. His organization also provided technical support on formulating policy and establishing or strengthening legislation and administrative measures for the effective management of labour migration in order to protect the rights of migrant workers and promote their integration in countries of destination. It was also cooperating in efforts to forge an international consensus on the management of migration and the development of a sound knowledge base on the subject. His organization would also work with others to help achieve the commitment on HIV/AIDS, through its programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, the objective of which was to raise awareness of the socio-economic and development impact of AIDS through its effects on the labour market and employment. It also supported Governments, employers and workers in their efforts to control the spread of HIV/AIDS and fight the discrimination and stigma related to HIV status. Lastly, recalling the Outcome commitment to address the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, he said that ILO stood ready to work with others to achieve the speedy implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Brussels Programme of Action for the least developed countries.

58. Successful implementation of summit outcomes required policy coherence and consistency, as inconsistencies between economic, financial and social policies were key obstacles to objectives being met. Complementarities therefore needed to be sought. A more integrated approach to economic and social policies was critical and the Decent Work Agenda could contribute to such an approach.

59. **Mr. Zenna** (Ethiopia) said that the Millennium Development Goals were achievable, one indication being the stronger partnerships for development that

had been formed since their adoption. The reaffirmation of previous commitments at the High-level Plenary Meeting and its decision to adopt by 2006 comprehensive national development strategies for achieving all internationally agreed objectives, including the Goals, as well as recent communiqués by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, were encouraging. Ethiopia would be completing its own needs assessment for its national strategy by the end of the year.

60. It would be the Committee's task to follow up the decisions relating to development in the Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting, which included useful agreements on quick-impact initiatives, rural development, health, education and employment. His delegation welcomed the commitment by a number of development partners to achieving the 0.7 per cent target of gross national income (GNI) as official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries, and urged all partners to try to reach the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNI as assistance to the least developed countries by 2010. International assistance programmes should, as had been suggested, specifically target the amount of aid to be channelled through the budgets of recipient countries, and assistance should be aligned with their national strategies. Action on debt relief and trade reform to benefit low-income countries should also reflect the Millennium Development Goals. The welcome proposal of the Group of Eight to have the international financial institutions cancel 100 per cent of the outstanding debt of eligible heavily indebted poor countries should be implemented immediately.

61. Promoting the development of the productive sectors in developing countries would help to remove the supply-side constraints faced by the least developed among them in their access to world trade. Helping them to build the infrastructure for access to modern sources of energy, good roads and transfer of information and communication technologies would also allow those countries to attract foreign direct investment. The forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference should deal with export subsidies, enhanced market access and the removal of technical trade barriers, for trade was the key to sustained economic growth and development.

62. While the developing countries had the primary responsibility for their own development, partnerships that were predictable and consistent and mutually binding would be crucial in meeting the special needs of Africa.

63. On the important issue of implementation, the Committee should provide clear guidance. All institutions in charge of translating commitments into action should work more closely with the General Assembly to accelerate implementation, by focusing on three interlinked issues: the elaboration of development strategies by the developing countries as a guide to their partners, the fulfilment of recent commitments with respect to ODA and debt relief, and attention to the lessons learned in the past five years. The Committee should allocate sufficient time to review implementation with the relevant stakeholders.

64. Ethiopia welcomed the mandate given to the Economic and Social Council in terms of follow-up and implementation of internationally agreed development goals.

65. **Mr. Loizaga** (Paraguay) said that the Committee should give particular attention to the Millennium Development Goals in order to compensate for the lack of greater commitments in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which represented the most recent commitment on their achievement. Greater attention should therefore be given to aspects such as follow-up to and implementation of financing for development, placing particular emphasis on financial issues, resource mobilization, debt relief, incentives for direct investment and the need to make trade liberalization the true engine for development. Given that the Outcome section on trade retained very few of the proposals defended by developing countries, it was crucial to conclude agreements that more clearly identified the short- and medium-term objectives for conclusion of the Doha Round in order to achieve more concrete commitments on market opening, elimination of export subsidies, and reduction of domestic support that both distorted trade and limited the participation of developing countries in the international market.

66. Paraguay firmly believed in a system of free, fair and equitable trade based on a "twin-track" approach and, with a view to the upcoming WTO Ministerial Conference, therefore believed it was essential to fully implement the provisions agreed at the WTO General Council meeting of 1 August 2004 — known as the "July package" — in particular its subparagraph on development. In addition to the problems caused by its landlocked status, Paraguay was now suffering as a

result of high oil prices, which impacted negatively on its economic stability and growth and made it even harder for it to transport its products.

67. Paraguay also called for commitments made under the aegis of the United Nations, such as that agreed in the Almaty Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals, to become a reality. Although the 2005 World Summit Outcome reaffirmed the commitment to address the special needs of the landlocked developing countries, the international community was still a long way from providing such countries with useful tools to overcome the difficulties caused by their geographical location.

68. There was little point in merely reproducing past agreements. Instead, the international community should have the courage to agree on measures that would mitigate the severe disadvantages faced by vulnerable groups and distribute the benefits of development in a more equitable manner. Globalization punished smaller, more undeveloped countries, while benefiting those that had already achieved a higher level of growth and development. Small and vulnerable economies must not be abandoned to their fate in the current highly competitive market. While job growth clearly depended on many different factors, the Committee should give more attention to the issue, as any fall in employment would generate widespread economic and social problems and threaten democratic stability. While Latin America and the Caribbean had enjoyed average economic growth of 4.5 per cent in 2004, its open unemployment rate was still above 10 per cent of the workforce, demonstrating that growth in production, while desirable, must be accompanied by policies to stimulate the creation of decent and well-paid employment in all sectors, as one of the surest ways of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Lastly, greater commitment was needed to resource mobilization and cooperation — whether North-South, South-South or triangular — in order to create the synergies needed to break the vicious cycle of inaction and achieve greater equity and incentive, enabling countries to finally overcome the obstacles hindering their sustainable development.

69. **Mr. Olaniyan** (Observer for the African Union) said that the key issues before the Committee were economic development, poverty alleviation and the special needs of Africa. A major achievement of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly had been the strong commitment to attaining the Millennium Development Goals. The African Union had made the Goals the benchmark for measuring development in Africa in its Strategic Framework Plan for Development, which underscored the need for sound macroeconomic policies and a regional approach. The Union looked forward to working with all those involved in implementing the Goals by providing technical support for development efforts and helping African countries adopt and implement national strategies.

70. Full and productive employment for all must be central to macroeconomic policies and development strategies; and development partners must work with African countries in their regional approach to poverty and unemployment. In a globalized world, partnerships were clearly crucial, and additional resources had to be secured through external debt relief, an improved global trading system, increased ODA and both foreign direct investment and mobilization of domestic resources. The Bretton Woods institutions had done well to extend debt relief to 14 African countries, but the African Union's position was that the path to sustainable development was through 100 per cent debt cancellation for the poor countries on the continent. The commitment to increase ODA to Africa in the next five years would do much to bridge the financing gaps; and the implementation of the recent Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness should be a priority. In so doing, resources should be channelled to the mutually agreed regional and subregional programmes on infrastructure development, comprehensive integrated national development plans, agricultural development, water, health and education.

71. **Ms. Nieto** (Ecuador) observed that, while a year of exhaustive negotiations had produced an Outcome on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals that reflected the minimum aspirations on many issues of concern, it marked the beginning of a new stage that would be dominated by the international community's global association for development, in which all must fulfil their commitments. The High-level Plenary Meeting had shown that there was the political will to do so.

72. The Meeting had given the clear message that the Doha Round of trade negotiations should focus on development, although that message seemed to have been largely ignored in other forums, a situation that the forthcoming WTO Conference in Hong Kong should rectify. Successful trade reform was essential

for successful reform of development policies. The unequal participation by the developing countries in the decision-making processes within the multilateral trade system had to be made more balanced, as trade barriers, especially to tropical products, were eliminated. The High-level Plenary Meeting had rightly underscored the need to find ways of dealing with the problems of middle-income, yet, highly indebted developing countries, forced to choose between their own social development plans and their international obligations.

73. There was a crucial link between emigration and development. Her own country, with its many emigrants who repatriated funds to support their families, was particularly concerned by the need to lower the cost of remittances.

74. The agreements reached at the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction were of interest to all vulnerable developing countries, which would benefit from global risk-reduction and disaster-preparedness strategies.

75. Within the United Nations system, the Economic and Social Council, with its capacity for coordination of operational activities for development, must take the lead on development issues.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.